Listing of Claims:

Claim 1. (Cancelled)

Claim 2. (Currently Amended) A laser machining apparatus according to Claim [[1]] 4, wherein ~~two of~~ the first and second said beam splits are deflected by a two-dimensional deflection means individually, whereupon optical paths of said two beam splits are aligned in essentially the same direction by said total reflection/transmission type beam combining means, while an outgoing beam of said polarizing type beam combining means is deflected two-dimensionally.

Claim 3. (Previously Presented) A laser machining apparatus according to Claim 2, wherein a relay optical system is disposed between said two-dimensional deflection means disposed on the incoming side of said polarizing type beam combining means and a two-dimensional deflection means disposed on the outgoing side thereof.

Claim 4. (New) A laser machining apparatus, comprising: a beam splitting means, a deflection means, a beam combining means and a machining lens, said beam splitting means splitting a laser beam into three laser beam splits different in optical path, said beam combining means aligning said optical paths of said three laser beam splits in essentially the same direction so that said three laser beam splits are incident on said machining lens:

wherein said beam combining means comprises:

a total reflection/transmission type beam combining means; and

a polarizing type beam combining means;

wherein said total reflection/transmission type beam combining means comprises a first triangular prism with a first inclined plane and a second triangular prism with a second inclined plane, wherein the first and second inclined planes face each other at a fixed distance, and wherein the optical paths of a first laser beam split and a second laser beam split incoming from two

directions almost perpendicular to each other are aligned in essentially the same direction by said total reflection/transmission type beam combining means;

and wherein said polarizing type beam combining means aligns said aligned optical paths of said first and second laser beam splits, which have a same polarization state, with the third beam split, which has a different polarization state than the first and second laser beam splits and which is essentially perpendicular to the aligned first and second laser beam splits, in essentially the same direction.

Claim 5. (New) The laser machining apparatus according to Claim 4, wherein said third beam split is split to form a fourth beam split and wherein said polarizing type beam combining means aligns said aligned optical paths of said first and second laser beam splits, which have the same polarization state, with the third beam split and the fourth beam split, which have the different polarization state than the first and second laser beam splits and which are essentially perpendicular to the aligned first and second laser beam splits, in essentially the same direction.